433 made do with what his own village could produce, and there was
178 really no trade in the ordinary sense of the word. The Moaga, essentially a stay-at-home, depended on the soil for food and clothing.

241 Only two new crops have been added since the coming of the
177 French: yams (na-niouyan, "chiefs' yams") and white potatoes. The recent increase in the cultivation of cotton makes it easier for the natives to meet their tax, and this encourages them to grow even more.

178 The French occupation has brought many benefits in its wake (creation of a network of roads, peace and the resulting free circulation among the villages, and suppression of banditry and looting), but it has also given the Moaga a desire to leave the country.

167 The extensive recruitment of [249] laborers for the needs of
464 other colonies in the area, for work on the roads, and for the now obligatory military service -- all of which are accepted reluctantly by the Mossi -- has caused many young men to emigrate.

Some of them set out, for the Gold Coast preferably, without the slightest means of support. They go to work in the English colony in order to earn money for clothes. Since they had no money when they started out, they remain there for months or even years, and this seriously diminishes the agricultural labor force at home. It also forces their old and helpless relatives to cultivate their fields alone.

Besides, so many of them never return!

The Native Diet

262 Sagbo (millet mush) is the principal item in the Mossi diet at all social levels. Rice, regarded as a luxury food, is eaten by the
[435] naba and notables. It costs from two and a half to three francs a kilogram at Ouagadougou and is therefore too expensive for most people. It may be added that it rarely is found in the diet of civil service employees.

264 Mossi chiefs usually have two main meals a day: a [250] first meal of sagbo or rice at around nine in the morning, and a second

264 meal of sagbo in the evening.

What we call breakfast is hardly known. Between the two main meals, however, the chiefs have meat grilled or roasted. They are very fond of it and have it seasoned with enough salt and pepper to make it possible to consume the endless number of [279] small gourds of beer which they drink from morning to night.

The Moaga has only one real meal a day, the evening meal. A large millet cake satisfies the day's hunger. If there is any left over, he keeps it carefully for his morning meal. If there is none left, a frequent state of affairs, he makes do with his zompanrga, crushed millet diluted with water and sometimes eaten with a bit of vegetable fat or a few peanuts.

He rarely eats any rice, and if he has no sagbo, he contents himself with benga and souma.

261 527 It is during the festivals that the Moaga eats his fill. At such times the head of the compound kills a goat, a sheep, or some chickens and has sagbo and fabirama prepared, or beans with copious amounts of karite butter. This is the feast. The members of the family stuff themselves to the point where attacks of diarrhea are inevitable. The results of the attacks are all the more serious in that they are never cared for properly.

263 439 The only seasonings known to the Moaga are kalgo (soumbala), red pepper, okra, and salt. No more than a few years ago, however, before the [251] development of trade in the colony, salt was brought from Timbuktu and Mopti by the Dioula and Yarcé and was so expensive that the Mossi people who lived in the countryside often went for six months without tasting salted food.

241 There is reason to believe that the time is not far off when the Moaga will devote his efforts much more intensively to cash crops, such as cotton, potatoes, peanuts, etc. In this domain, the province chiefs at Ouagadougou have made real progress.

Mogh'Nab' Kawinré (Threshing the Grain of the Mogho Naba)

241 643 782 Sacrifices. For this ceremony, the emperor summons the Mankougoudougou Tengsoba (a descendant of the autochthonous Nioniossé, masters of the land) to Ouagadougou and gives him a

775 it aside to return it to the soul when it leaves the body. From this
[735] comes the thank-you wish, "May God repay you!" If the deceased led an evil life, if he was quarrelsome or a thief, if he killed, he is condemned to walk over live coals to reach God, or if he is a murderer, he may come to God only after he has drunk all the blood he has shed, which God has saved for this purpose. The major offenders are detained by the treetops and never reach the place of souls. It must be said, however, that most Mossi take little heed of the penalties which may await them in the other life or deny their existence altogether.

The souls go to Bourtenga, the "gathering place of the souls," according to the etymology of the word, a place of indeterminate geographical location, or they go to Pilimpikou, a mountain located
775 in Kipirsi country. Their sole occupation over there is to go to market
764 at night, and this is why on the day of burial the deceased is given cowries so that he may buy millet beer and clothes in order not to look like a tramp.

The souls are white but otherwise they look like men, although they are nimbler and can move effortlessly and with great rapidity
[264] from one place to another. They do everything upside down; they eat with the left hand and do with it all the things we do with the right, and this is why the corpse is washed with the left hand. They wear their clothes inside out, with the pocket of the breechcloth facing in; they carry the spears iron downward, and they walk backwards because their eyes are placed behind their head. This is why the kourita who represents the deceased wears everything inside out.

775 The souls of the animals sacrificed to him, chickens, sheep, goats,
769 beeves, etc., go to join the deceased, who can thus feast, invite friends, and gather kin together, for people are reunited up there. Although nabas are no longer such, those who were subject to them on earth recreate their court. It is said that parents come to fetch their children, /87/ nabas their pages and favorite wives, and friends their friends, unless the survivors treat them very well and provide them with lots of food.

Indeed, the souls of the dead come back to earth to receive the gifts which are offered to them, to drink the blood of the victims sacrificed in their honor and the millet beer prepared for them on the annual Day of the Dead (basra). This is why no Mossi faithful to tradition ever drinks millet beer without first pouring a little on the

539 The goat replied, "The hyena should give all of herself." The lion told the hyena to remove her own leg. The hyena bit herself. It hurt, and she ran away. The lion caught her and killed her. The goat ran away with his salt and went home.

This is why the hyena attacks livestock.

181 The Mossi are polite. This is the quality that first strikes all those 576 who have dealings with them. We mentioned earlier that the natives always greet one another. In fear of their nabas, the Mossi maintain before them a respectful, almost humiliating posture. They are very attentive to important outsiders and see to it that they should lack nothing a Mossi might wish: a sitting stool and mat are brought in immediately along with the drink; the food is abundant and usually clean and carefully prepared.

181 The Mossi are very hospitable and willingly give alms for its own 574 sake, that is, to poor people who cannot repay. They are generous and always share with their neighbors, and when they have millet beer, they hand it out liberally. No woman who is brewing beer would allow a stranger of some importance to go by without offering him a gourdful, and she is displeased if he refuses. An object once offered is never retrieved, and stratagems must be used to make a native take back under some pretext what he has given away.

576 /114/ The Mossi always offer things with the right hand. It is an insult to pass the gourd or to take it with the left hand. The oldest person in a group helps himself from a dish first, and all those present follow in order of seniority, down to the youngest. On the other ● 264 hand, the eldest stops eating first, and it is the youngest who eats the 27 last bits and cleans the gourd. When drinking, however, the most eminent person drinks the last drop.

576 Children do not greet their parents in the home, because it is their 574 home; but if a properly brought-up girl sees her mother coming with a full jar or a basket, she rushes to take the load from her, even if the woman is only a few yards from the soukala. When a friend has come to visit, it is considered good manners to carry her load for some distance when she leaves. In any case, visitors are always seen on their way, sometimes to the outskirts of the village.

576 The Mossi do not lack tact and sensibility. When they want something, they first delegate a friend with a gift, then send word that they have a small matter to discuss; sometimes they hint at what it may be and leave without waiting for an answer. Some time later

5: Hammond E-5 (1954-1956) 1959
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342 592 [264] received, gossip exchanged, and social and ceremonial obligations discussed in its shade. Here also, the men of the lineage take their meals, brought out to them from the kitchens of their wives and set before them by their sons, who first attend their fathers and then dine on what remains.

592 252 [512] A few paces away is the grinding platform (*nere*) where the women gather to prepare the grain for their families' meals. This great circular mud table, some twenty feet in diameter, is raised about three feet from the ground. Its surface is beaten hard and worked over with cinders and manure to make it rainproof. Each woman has her assigned place at this platform where she keeps her pestle and where she stations herself at dawn and again at dusk to grind her millet and learn the news of the day.

592 Frequently found at the outer perimeter of the dwelling of the Mossi kin group is the house of the son of a lineage woman who has returned from his father's household to live in the benevolent presence of his mother's family, with whom he enjoys an especially permissive relationship. The house set aside for the residence of the young unmarried men of the lineage is also located on the outer edge of the compound dwelling.

555 184 A recent addition to the traditional pattern of village organization described above is the independent households of socially ambitious individuals who have chosen to separate themselves from the residences of their lineages in order to profit from their own economic or religious enterprises. Many have become independently wealthy through successful commercial ventures; others, as a result of conversion to Islam, have gained prestige through religious authority and wealth through the tuition and services provided by the Koranic students. Often these people are much younger than their lineage elders, not in line for the inheritance of political or religious authority through traditional channels, and unwilling either to accept the authority of their seniors or to share economically with the less prosperous members of their lineages. They are deviants, in conflict with the communal patterns of consumption and with the emphasis on accepting established authority which characterizes the traditional social organization of the Mossi.

THE TRADITIONAL ECONOMY

613 476 243 Much agricultural endeavor is necessarily co-operative. Each farmer is dependent on the assistance of his kinsmen to get his fields seeded, cultivated, and harvested in the short time during which each of these operations must take place. However, the yield from his field remains his own, to be shared only with his own wives and children. Members of the lineage also work in the fields under the specific control of the lineage elder. Although the harvest from these fields is stored in the granary

242 [i.e. at a sub shelter in the entrance-way. — Analyst]

592 The compound, from an intellectual point of view, is a kind of subfamily. It is not the whole family; it is not the equivalent of the total family. It is, however, quite superior to the single household.

592 If the Mossi family of Yatenga were completely communal and perfectly integrated, the 100 or 125 persons or so who make up a Mossi family would live and work together. A less marked but still quite appreciable degree of community would exist if the compound were a tight economic unit (this does occur among many blacks of the /French/ Sudan, especially among the Bobo /230/ of the Residency of Léo, the Menkiéra, the Nounouma /Nunuma/, the Kassonfra /Awuna/, etc., and also among the Samo of Yatenga as we shall see later), with all the people who live in it working and consuming together under the authority and guidance of the head of the home. Actually, there is even more disintegration of the family among our Mossi of Yatenga. In each home there are work groups which vary in number according to the importance of the compound and the number of its occupants.

592 Work groups. —We must proceed to the work group, then, in order to deal with the actual economic unit. This group has the communal fields which are not, therefore, properly speaking, familial fields or even subfamilial fields. They belong to a subordinate unit. It is the head of the work group who supplies food for all the people in his group during the greater part of the year (seven months out of twelve). In return, they owe him the larger part of their time during the rainy season (two days out of three) but little work during the dry season. Each member of the group also has his own little field which he cultivates on the third day, as we shall see later on.

592 Consumption. Meals. —People do not assemble for meals in the same fashion during the rainy season as during the dry season.

During the rainy season the members of each work group eat together at noon in the fields, but men and women are always apart. The boys eat with the men, the girls and small children with the women. In the evening they gather for meals in the same manner as during the dry season.

During the dry season the members of each compound, the whole zaka, eat together, but they are divided into several groups. First, there is the basic division between men and women. Then, if the compound is a large one, there are on the male side the groupings of old men, married men, and young unmarried men. There are also three groups on the female side: old women, married women,

592 and young girls. Thus, there are six groups altogether, but we must
264 add that when the women do not get along well, each one eats in her own hut with her own children. In the smaller compounds, there cannot be six groups; there are only two basic ones, that of the men and that of the women.

592 For the preparation of food during the seven months when millet
252 furnished by the head of the work group is eaten, or in other words the millet from the communal fields (roughly from April to October), each woman is "on duty" for 24 hours and cooks for the whole group. The other women help her, of course, by fetching water, pounding millet for her, etc. During the five months when the millet from the small private fields is eaten (November-March), each woman prepares her husband's food. When a husband has several wives, they take turns preparing the food.

592 /23I/ As we can see, the manner of preparing meals follows the
252 schedule of millet consumption. While the communal grain distributed
264 by the head of the work group or under his supervision is being consumed, cooking is done on a work group basis. During the time when the millet from household fields is being consumed, the preparation of meals is on a household basis. The actual consumption of the meals, however (except when people are working in the fields) involves a larger community, that of the compound. There remains, however, the basic division between men and women, who must not eat together and who always split into two groups at mealtime. In the larger compounds, moreover, each of these two major groups is further divided into subgroups according to natural age lines. Finally, to cap it all, the female spirit of anarchy sometimes causes some of the women to withdraw. Hence, for the consumption and preparation of food as well as for its production, there exists only this very unstable community which is characteristic of the family we are studying.

592 Exceptions.—We come now to the Mossi household, which we
182 shall discuss at some length. Before doing so, however, it must be stated that the family as we have just described it has its exceptions here and there.

First, there are exceptions in the sense of community, in the sense of integration; above all, there are exceptions in the sense of greater disintegration.

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
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by the sovereign's wives. Other pages waited upon the monarch, and accompanied him when he moved about the courtyard. When the ruler drank any liquid, the pages rubbed the palm of one hand with the fingers of the other; when he sneezed, everyone clapped; and when he stepped out to urinate, a page accompanied him, turned his back to him, knelt down, and saluted by rubbing his palm.

When the Mogho Naba had finished his morning audiences, he entered his palace for a solitary meal. This meal was prepared by one of his young wives, who tasted it in his presence before giving it to the page who served him.[10] After eating, the monarch rested for a few hours; then he emerged into the courtyard to grant audiences and hear court cases until sunset. At that time he retired to his palace, and those courtiers who were not connected with the evening ceremonies returned to their homes.

The ceremony that closed the day at the monarch's court was called "Kwaga Basgha" (literally, "final meal"). This ceremony still survives. As soon as the sun began to set, the samande-kamba took their heavy batons and stood guard to prevent unauthorized persons from coming near the *namtibo* (royal amulets). The Baloum Naba and the Bendere Naba entered the palace courtyard and knelt before the zongo. The chief page then brought out the *kwaga*, a pottery vessel containing a fire ritually associated with the namtibo.[11] The vessel was placed on the ground, and the page blew on the fire to make it burn brightly. Meanwhile, the Bendere Naba rubbed his fingers across his drum to make the growl of a lion. When the fire finally died out, the Zusoaba Kasanga and the Baloum Naba closed the ceremony by rising, coming together, and saluting the namtibo in the traditional Mossi manner. (The Mogho Naba did not attend this ceremony.) Before the officials left for the night, the pages gave them pots of beer prepared by the royal wives. Sometimes these officials visited the Mogho Naba before they retired to their compounds. Once these men had departed, the pages served the ruler his evening meal, which again had been prepared by one of his young wives.

During the hours of darkness the Mogho Naba conducted many secret affairs of state and conversed with the members of his household. Persons seeking the nam of a deceased relative were often granted audience at night, as were litigants in court cases. When there were no pressing matters of state, the ruler gathered some of the royal wives around him and discussed family affairs, which protocol forbade him to discuss during the day. Some rulers reportedly disguised themselves and visited the wards of the town in the company of a young man from the palace, in an effort to learn things that did not ordinarily come to a ruler's attention.

The Mogho Naba slept in a grass hut in the palace compound. Two